

Disinfection and Environmental Cleaning

1. Examples of recommended disinfection methods for noncritical items.

Noncritical items are those that come in contact with intact skin only but not mucous membranes. The following noncomprehensive list gives examples of patient care surfaces generally regarded as noncritical and also surfaces that patients and caregivers frequently touch. These require regular disinfection and immediate cleaning/disinfection if contaminated with body secretions/excretions.

The following noncomprehensive list on noncritical items/surfaces and the disinfectant table do not cover situations and devices requiring a higher level of disinfection or sterilization. For more information on this broader range of topics, see Reference #1.

Examples of Noncritical Items

Bathroom Fixtures	IV Poles
Bed Pans/Urinals	Lift/Transfer Equipment
Bed Rails	Patient Devices
Bed Scales	Standing Scales
Commodes	Stethoscopes
Door Knobs	Telephones
Electric Thermometers	Trays/Stand
Exam Tables	Walkers
Infusion/Feeding Pumps	Wheelchairs

Types of Disinfectants, Recommended Concentration and Exposure Times for Noncritical Items		
<i>Disinfectant</i>	<i>Concentration</i>	<i>Exposure (Contact) Time</i>
Sodium hypochlorite (household bleach) prepared fresh for use within 24 hours	1 tablespoon to 1 quart of water	Five (5) minutes exposure time
Phenolic germicidal detergent solution	Follow product label for use/dilution	Follow product label
Iodophor germicidal detergent solution	Follow product label for use/dilution	Follow product label
Quaternary ammonium germicidal detergent solution	Follow product label for use/dilution	Follow product label
Isopropyl alcohol	70-90%	Five (5) minutes exposure time
Hydrogen Peroxide	3%	Thirty (30) minutes exposure time
Home Use e.g., Lysol®	Follow product label for use/dilution	Follow product label

2. Environmental Cleaning

Housekeeping surfaces (such as floors, chairs, etc.) are to be maintained in a state of visible cleanliness by using an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved hospital grade disinfectant/detergent designed for general housekeeping purposes. Isolation rooms should be cleaned after other rooms. Water, mop heads and rags should be changed after use. Frequently touched fabric items should be cleaned or changed after use or discharge.

It is paramount to allow recommended contact time of disinfectant solution on all environmental surfaces. Let surfaces air dry.

References:

1. CDC. *Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Health Care Facilities*. Recommendations of CDC and Health Care Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC). MMWR June 6, 2003; 52:10.
2. Favero, M. (1995). Chemical Germicides in the Health Care Field: The Perspective from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In Rutala, W.A. (ed.) *Chemical Germicides in Health Care*. Washington D.C.: APIC.
3. Rutala, W.A., 1994, 1995, & 1996 APIC Guidelines Committee. (1996). *APIC Guideline for Selection and Use of Disinfectants*. American Journal of Infection Control; 24:313-342.
4. Rutala, W.A., Barbee, S.L. et al. *Antimicrobial Activity of Home Disinfectants and Natural Products Against Potential Human Pathogens*. Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology; 21:1:33-38.